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INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 8295  
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 2108  
RUEHB/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2623  
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SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: OIIP KMDR KPAO JA

SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - NORTH KOREA AND WAR ON  
TERRORISM

¶1. LEAD STORIES: Several broadcasters on Wednesday morning gave top coverage to the meeting in Honolulu between Secretary of State Clinton and Foreign Minister Okada on Tuesday, during which they reportedly affirmed the start of a bilateral process to deepen the alliance.

¶2. "'Reckless Intent' Seen in DPRK Message" On North Korea's recent statement calling for peace talks among 'concerned parties to the Korean War armistice agreement,' the liberal Mainichi editorialized (1/13): "This message apparently contained dangerous intent. In the first place, it is obvious that Japan would be excluded [from such talks]. If the 'concerned parties' are limited strictly to the signatories of the armistice accord, it would mean an exclusion of South Korea resulting in tripartite talks only including the U.S., China, and North Korea. This would be a perfect setup [for the DPRK] that would disturb the unity among the U.S., Japan, and South Korea.... It is imperative to carefully discern Pyongyang's real intent. It is absolutely necessary to prevent the situation from progressing in line with a scenario scripted by Kim Jong Il."

¶3. "North Korea's Denuclearization Must Come First" The liberal Tokyo Shimbun insisted in an editorial (1/13): "[The DPRK statement calling for peace talks] is apparently part of its intensified 'diplomatic offensive' of late. However, there is still concern that the statement was issued in order to deflect international pressure on North Korea to denuclearize.... The statement echoed North Korea's previous line of argument intended to minimize the U.S. military threat and maintain the 'Kim Jong Il regime.' However, North Korea has betrayed the trust of the international community.... The DPRK should take steps

toward denuclearization first before calling for a peace treaty."

¶4. "President Obama Adopts Hard Line in Combating Terrorism" The liberal Asahi wrote from Washington (1/13): "Following the recent terrorist attacks by al-Qaeda and its affiliated operatives, the Obama administration appears to be abandoning its soft approach on combating terrorism, as seen in proposed dialogue with the Muslim community and respect for the human rights of terror suspects. Behind this policy shift is the American public's deepening concerns about the U.S. playing a 'cat-and-mouse game' with terrorist organizations. Calls are even emerging for the restoration of internationally-condemned measures, such as inhumane interrogation methods."

ROOS